



World Christian Fellowship

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Apostles- Peter 01

Luke 6:12-16

Luke 6:12-16, *Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.¹³ And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:¹⁴ Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew;¹⁵ Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot;¹⁶ Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.*

General observations:

They were all common men.

All of them were from Galilee with the exception of Judas, who was from a town called Kerioth in the south.

They were rural people from the part of the nation of Israel that did not really have much prestige or nobility.

- None of them was a Pharisee.
- None of them was a Sadducee.
- None of them was a priest.
- None of them was a scribe.
- None of them was any prominent person.

They were all very common men.

Four of them were fishermen, one was a tax collector, one was a terrorist, and one was a traitor.

There are four lists of the apostles in the New Testament.
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts.

Matthew 10, Mark 3, Luke 6 and Acts 1.

In these lists the names are always the same, so that we know exactly who these twelve were. But the names are not in identical order in the lists, with some exceptions.

The first name in all four lists is always Peter.

We have three groups of four.

- Group one,
- Group two, and
- Group three.

Group One:

1. Simon called Peter,
2. Andrew,
3. James,
4. John.

Peter, James and John's names get mixed around in the list, Peter's is always first, but they are always in group one.

Group Two:

1. Philip,
2. Bartholomew — or Nathanael,
3. Matthew,
4. Thomas.

Always group two in every list.

The names of Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas get mixed, but Philip is always the first name of group two.

Group Three:

1. James the son of Alphaeus,
2. Simon the Zealot,
3. Judas son of James,
4. Judas Iscariot.

Always the same in every list.

The names may be mixed a little bit, the two middle names, the names of Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James get mixed.

James the son of Alphaeus is always the first name in group four and Judas is always the last name of the twelve.

What do we learn by that?

The Twelve were divided into four.
group one, group two, group three.

These groups had leaders.

The leader of group one, obviously Peter.

The leader of group two: Philip.

The leader of group three: James the son of Alphaeus.

The name at the top of the list is always Peter, who was the leader of everybody.

These groups of four are in decreasing intimacy from Christ.

Group one always around Christ; Peter, James, John and Andrew, the most intimate group.

They were the first disciples that Jesus called.

John 1:35-42,

The first group He called to be disciples, here he identifies as apostles.

They have been with Him the longest and they are the most intimate with Christ.

Throughout the ministry and life of Christ, Peter, James, and John in particular are very intimate with Christ, and Andrew is close.

Group two is a little bit more distant, but we do know quite a bit about Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, and Thomas.

Group three seems at a distance.

We do not know much about them at all. The only thing we know is about Judas because he betrayed Jesus.

So, Jesus had twelve, but He could only have very intimately three and sometimes four and they kind of move away in terms of intimacy.

Jesus had very close to Him three. Next came Andrew and then the next and the next. So, we learn that there have to be some decisions made about who one spends intimate time with because you can't be everything to everybody.

We also learn that there are leaders within the group.

- leader of group one, Peter.
- leader of group two, Philip.
- leader of group three, James the son of Alphaeus.

There are leaders among leaders and a leader over all of them, namely Peter.

Simon Peter.

Simon is a very common name.

Another Simon down at the end of verse 15 who was the Zealot.

Very common Jewish name at that time; Simon, whom He, Jesus, also named Peter.

Now this is always the first name at the head of every list.

Not only because we assume, he was the leader but because Jesus said he is the leader.

Matthew 10:2, *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;*

Simon Peter was the first, the **prtos**. It does not mean the first in a list. It means the chief, the leader.

So, the Scripture in Matthew 10:2 says he was the leader. There is no question about it.

He was a fisherman by trade.

He lived with his brother Andrew, also a fisherman. They had a family fishing business. They caught fish on the Sea of Galilee.

A certain kind of fish that exists only in the Sea of Galilee which you might know today is called St. Peter's fish. If you ever go to the Sea of Galilee, you can have it for lunch.

That is what Simon and Andrew did.

They were fishermen and they were originally from a small village called Bethsaida, but later moved to Capernaum. Capernaum was the major town on the north tip of the Sea of Galilee.

The Lord said it would be destroyed and never rebuilt, and that is exactly the case. They have found ruins of a synagogue there. They have found digging down ruins of a church. They go down further they find the sign of the fish carved in foundation stones way down.

The tradition was they built the first church there on the foundation of the home of Peter. So, when you see the ruins of that early church that may well be the very place Peter lived. It is a short walk from there to the edge of the lake. So, they grew up in that area, Bethsaida, moved to Capernaum to run their fishing business on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee.

We also know about Simon was married and he had a wife.

Luke 4:38, *Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her.*

Jesus healed his mother-in-law.

We also know it because the apostle Paul.

1 Corinthians 9:5, *Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?*

It may indicate that they did not have any children.

The Bible does not tell us how many children Peter had. We have absolutely no idea whether he had any children or whether he had some, whether they were grown by the time that he took his wife along.

Paul does say that Peter took his wife on an apostolic mission. So, he was married. That is really all we know about his domestic life.

We also know that his name was Simon Bar-Jona.

Matthew 16:17, *Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*

Jesus calls him Simon Bar-Jona and in John 21 Jesus calls him Simon, son of Jonah, or Jonas.

His father's name then was John, or Jonas, or Jonah. Any one of those would transliterate the original language. So, his original name was Simon.

As typically, bar, meaning "son of," when someone gets a Bar Mitzvah, they become a son of the law. Bar means "son of." So, his father's name was John or Jonas or Jonah.

His father probably starting in the fishing business when he was young and that is the way it was for life for him, he thought, till he met the Lord.

In Luke 5 Peter went for fishing and could not catch anything. Jesus asked him to launch his boat into the sea then after finished preaching he asked Peter to cast his nets.

Luke 5:10, *and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men."*

Jesus told Peter that he is going to come after Him to follow Him and to catch men for His Kingdom.

Luke 6:14, *Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew;*

The Lord gave him another name. This is important to note the language, "*whom He also named Peter.*"

Jesus did not say you have a new name to replace the old one. No.

He also called him Peter. He was Simon and he was also Peter.

Why sometimes he is called Simon and sometimes he is called Peter?

Why sometimes it refers to Simon in terms of his boat or his house or his fishing enterprise, and other times it refers to Peter?

When we do a careful study of that, we will find that there are some very specific things going on with regard to that.

When Jesus first met Peter in the Gospel of John.

John 1:42, *And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).*

That is Aramaic.

Used to be called Simon.

From now on you will be called Cephas.

That is the Aramaic word for Peter.

The Greek word is Petros.

Both words mean rock.

His new name was rock, Rock Bar-Jona.

That is exactly what Petros means. Cephas means.

Why does Jesus do this to Peter?

The Lord has a purpose in mind.

By nature, he was bold, he was wavering, he made great promises of what he would do and did not do it.

He was one of those kinds of guys that goes whole-hearted into something and then bails back out of it.

First one in, and first one out.

The Lord changed his name because He wanted to work on him in an immediate way. It was very easy to do once He gave him the name Rock, because by what Jesus called him, He sent him a message.

If He said to him, "Simon," then he was acting like his old self.

If He said to him, "Rock," he was acting the way the Lord wanted him to act.

Simon was Simon, wavering, impulsive, eager, but he needed to be Rock.

If he called him Simon, he got one message.

Matthew 16:18, *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

Just by the name He called him, immediately had access into his spiritual thinking.

Even after his name was changed you can see a consistency in how these names are used.

Whenever he is called Simon, it is in one of two contexts.

1. Secular context
2. Sinful context

Secular context.

Mark 1:29-30, *Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once.*

Luke 4:38, *Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her.*

Acts 10:17, *Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been*

sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate.

That is just a secular context, Simon's house, nothing to do with spirituality, the kingdom ministry.

Simon's mother-in-law
Simon's boat,
Simon's fishing partners,

So, when referring to Simon in purely the secular element, he is Simon.

Sinful context:

Whenever there was sin there, he was dubbed Simon.

Luke 5:5, *But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."*

This is old Simon the fisherman. But finally, he starts to make some spiritual responses.

Luke 5:8, *When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"*

Peter who sees himself the way God wants him to see himself.

John 21 Jesus says, go to Galilee"

Jesus has risen from the dead and says, "You go to Galilee and I will appear to you there," post-resurrection.

They go there. Peter says, "I am not waiting any longer. I do not know if I can do this. I am going to go back and take up my fishing business."

He goes down, gets in his boat, gets his nets, all his ropes, the whole paraphernalia and they all said, we are also going with you." They got on the boats and went back to fishing.

Jesus showed up and rerouted all the fish so they could not catch any. They came into shore and Jesus made breakfast. The disciples come to the shore, Jesus looks at Peter and He says this, "Simon, Simon, do you love Me?"

"Yes, I love You."

Second time, "Simon, Simon, do you love Me?"

"Yes, I love You."

"Simon, Simon, do you love Me? Then do what I told you."

That is Simon.

Luke 22:31, *"And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat."*

When we see "Simon," we are seeing elements of the sin, or elements of the secular. Simon means hearing or listen.

When we go through, look for Peter, those are the good times.

Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. He asked His disciples to pray with Him. He comes back and He found them sleeping and He says to him.

Mark 14:37, *Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour?"*

It must have gotten to the point where whenever the Lord said "Simon," Peter just cringed. "Please call me Rock." To which the Lord could have replied, "I will call you Rock when you act like a rock."

John knew him well. So, seventeen times in the gospel of John, John calls him Simon Peter. I love that.

John could not make up his mind because he saw both sides all the time. So, he just decided "Simon Peter." Sometimes Simon, Sometimes Rock.

Peter was like all of us!

- Carnal and spiritual,
- Functioning in the flesh sometimes, and functioning in the Spirit sometimes,
- Sinful sometimes, and righteous sometimes.

The Lord even gave him a name to try to reinforce what He wanted him to be. He wanted him to be a rock.

Nothing about Peter is self-righteous. This is the greatest and most prominent preacher of the twelve.

Peter more than any other apostle, laid the foundation of the church, followed up by that late coming apostle Paul. Peter is the hero in the first twelve chapters of the book of Acts.

Peter was the leader, no question.

- ✓ The Lord chose him to be the leader.
- ✓ The Lord equipped him to be the leader.
- ✓ The Lord shaped him to be the leader.
- ✓ The Lord trained him to be the leader.

When we look at Peter, we can see how God builds a leader. This is a biblical illustration of how God builds a leader.

The gospels literally are filled with his name. His name is mentioned in the gospels more than any name but Jesus.

- Nobody speaks as often as Peter and nobody is spoken to by the Lord as often as Peter.
- No disciple is so reproved by the Lord as Peter, and no disciple reproved the Lord but Peter.
- No disciple ever so boldly confessed and outspokenly acknowledged the lordship of Christ as Peter.
- No one denied it as boldly as Peter.
- No one is so praised and blessed as Peter.
- No one else is called Satan but Peter.

The Lord had harder things to say to Peter than He ever said to anybody else and that was part of making him the man He wanted him to be, the leader Christ desired.

God took a common man with an ambivalent, vacillating, impulsive, unsubmitive personality and shaped him into the leader of the twelve, the greatest preacher out of the apostles. The real power of the first twelve chapters of Acts, the birth of the church.

Are leaders born or made?

The Leaders are born and then they are shaped.

Peter had that God-given fabric woven into his personality to make him a leader. He was the right raw material.

Lord wove that in his mother's womb.

Psalms 139:13-14, *For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvellous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.*

The Lord put together the right materials to make him the man that could be shaped into a leader. There are just sort of personal features of his personality that are critical to leaders. They cannot be developed, they are inborn.

Three elements for the Lord to make a leader.

1. Inquisitiveness
2. Initiative
3. Involvement

1. Inquisitiveness.

When you are looking for a leader, find somebody who asks a lot of questions. It is very important.

People who do not ask questions do not wind up as leaders.

Curiosity is critical to leadership. People who are content with what they do not know and content with what they do not understand and content with what they have not analysed and content with problems they have not solved cannot lead.

Leaders must have an almost insatiable curiosity to know what they do not know. To understand what they do not understand. They understand that knowledge is power.

Whoever has the information has the lead. If you want to find a leader, look for somebody who asks a lot of questions.

Some of you have kids like that. You have maybe one kid out of your little batch and this kid just asks question after question. We get weary answering these questions. That is the fabric of leadership. This tremendous internal drive to know what they do not know and understand what they do not understand is all about solving problems.

We have probably got another kid who sits in the corner quietly and never asks anything. He will probably grow up and be a computer guy who will work for your other son. Leaders have tremendous curiosity.

In the gospels, Peter asks more questions than all the other apostles combined.

We only probably have a part of it, it was probably all day every day for Jesus. "Peter, just a minute, I will answer you as soon as I am done with this person."

I love people that ask questions.

They are always trying to understand what is going on.

2. Initiative.

There are three kinds of people.

1. There are people who make things happen,
2. There are people who watch things happen,
3. There are people who say, "what's happening?"

If a man is to be wired for leadership, he has to have initiative. He has to be the kind of person that makes things happen.

Peter not only asked all the questions, but he was also always the first one to answer any question posed by Christ.

Peter would just dive in where angels fear to tread.

Matthew 16:13-16, *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" ¹⁴ So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

The other guys are still processing the information. Peter was very fast. That is a part of leadership, fast on the trigger. Sometimes he had to reel back, undo, unsay, be rebuked; but it is part of leadership to grab initiative by the throat.

Garden of Gethsemane:

The Roman soldiers from Port Antonia, 500 of them, including the high priest and all the retinue from the temple. They have come to take Jesus.

Peter was there.

Peter immediately pulls out his sword, takes a swing at the head of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. The high priest was out in front because he was the dignitary of dignitaries, so he is in the front. Beside him is his servant. Peter tried to cut his head off. He ducked, lost his ear.

John 18:10-11, *Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. ¹¹ So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"*

There was a whole Roman army there, what does he think he was going to do?

Go through the whole group?

One at a time?

Sometimes this initiative does not take the long view, or the broad view. It is just boom. But that is the stuff of leadership.

There are some people you just have to drag kicking and screaming in any forward direction. Not Peter. He always wanted to know what he did not know. He always wanted to understand what he did not understand. He was the first one to ask a question and he was the first one to answer the question, take the initiative, charge ahead and that is the stuff of leadership.

Peter must have some kind of courage to stand up in Jerusalem on Pentecost and preach the gospel in the face of the population that had just executed their Messiah.

That is going to take tremendous courage but that is the kind of guy He is. By the time the Lord has shaped that initiative, it has been transformed into boldness.

3. Involvement:

A true leader is in the middle of the action.

A true leader is not sitting in the background telling everybody what to do while he lives a life of comfort away from the fray. A true leader goes through life with a cloud of dust around him. That is why people follow him.

People do not follow somebody somewhere else. They follow somebody in the fray. Jesus comes one night. He is walking on the water.

Who out of all the disciples jumps out of the boat?

Peter.

Peter always wanted to be where the action is happening. He was walking on the water. Rest of the disciples are just looking over and trying to make sure they do not fall overboard in the storm.

This is serious involvement. Jesus was there, he was here, he had to close the gap.

People look at this incident, they criticize Peter's lack of faith. He got out there, he looked around.

What was Peter doing?

He started to sink.

Peter had weak faith.

Let us look at the faith of others.

Where were the other eleven?

They never got out of the boat.

Talk about weak faith. Before you criticize Peter, remember where he was when he began to sink. People look at Peter's life and they say he was around the fire, and he denies Jesus.

But before we condemn Peter too quickly, he was alone in a position where such a temptation could hit him because he was doing his best to stay as close to Christ as he could.

That is a leader.

Everybody else may bail out. He stays as close to the action as he can get.

That is the raw material that was in Peter, that kind of inquisitiveness, that kind of initiative, that kind of involvement.

Peter asked all the questions.

He was the first person to charge ahead for whatever responsibility needed to be done. He wanted to be in the middle of everything.

That is what the leaders are made of.

Lord knew that and He wove it all in the fabric of who he was in his mother's womb. Now when he reaches adulthood, it is time for the Lord to shape it.

If it is not shaped by the Lord, it could be disastrous. So, two other things must happen.

There is nothing in a man that is perfect. There is nothing that is all complete.



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We also learn that there are leaders within the group.

- leader of group one, Peter.
- leader of group two, Philip.
- leader of group three, James the son of Alphaeus.

There are leaders among leaders and a leader over all of them, namely Peter.

Simon Peter. Experience.

Long before Peter was ever born, way back in the councils of eternity, God had determined that the whole redemptive plan was going to come to pass, that the Lord would come to earth and be incarnate, that He would have apostles.

Their names were well-known to God. They were written down. Peter was planned into the program.

Peter had all that leadership raw material.

Leaders are inquisitive.

Leaders have initiative.

Leaders also are involved.

Lord refines the leaders by shaping their life through experiences. These critical experiences that Peter needed to become the man he needed to be.

Leaders are born with the raw material but shaped by experience.

Peter faced many dramatic, earth-shattering, life-changing experiences.

Peter was going to be given a tremendous responsibility to proclaim the gospel. Jesus, die, rise again, forty days later go

back to heaven, and the whole future of the gospel is in the hands of the twelve and predominantly in the hands of Peter, who was the leading preacher.

Peter is going to have this tremendous and immense responsibility.

He needed,

- Dedication.
- Resolution.
- Endurance.
- Self-discipline.
- Work ethic

So, the Lord must put him through experiences that shape and mould the man.

1. Divine Revelation

John chapter 6 is a critical chapter in the ministry of Jesus, but it starts out with the feeding of five thousand men, probably twenty thousand including women and children.

Jesus feeds them by using the little boy's lunch of loaves and fish multiply and feed the whole crowd and have enough left to feed the apostles as well.

After that He teaches them this is bread that perishes, this is physical food, but I Am the bread of life.

You eat this bread and you never hunger again. Jesus turns the whole thing toward Himself and He's talking about you must eat My flesh and drink My blood.

You must receive Me totally if you want to have eternal life.

Some of the people who were following Him were not ready for that.

John 6:66, *From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.*

The message got too serious!
They left!

Jesus said therefore to the twelve.

John 6:67, *Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"*

Are you ready to leave Me because of the strong message?

John 6:68-69, *But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

What an incredible statement.

Where are we going to go?

This is a profound theological, Christological statement!

That was a revelatory experience and that is the first experience and his great revelation!

Lord wanted Peter to know that he was going to get his message from God.

He was not going to have to think it up, dream it up, scheme it up, make it up. He is going to have material provided for him, revelation from God.

Matthew 16:15-17, *He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"* ¹⁶*Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* ¹⁷*Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*

Peter needed to know that he would be given a divine message. That is essentially what ministry is.

We just pass on a divine message.

Peter needed to know that he could do this, that he could go out and do this job of preaching.

Being an apostle is being one sent to preach. Peter might have felt that he was not educated, trained, not been to school, seminary, and do not know very much.

Do not worry about it. You are going to get it from God, His great revelation.

God wants to use your mouth, Peter. God can speak through you. So, the Lord gave him the experience of revelation.

On the Day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2, Peter preaches that great message. Three thousand people are converted. He preaches again and thousands more and thousands more are converted through those opening chapters of Acts. He did not have to worry about what he was going to say.

The greatest fear that some people have is the fear of public speaking.

Why it is fearful?

Because you do not know what you are going to say!

I do not have that fear because I do not have to make up the message. I can preach it with authority because it comes from God.

I do not get it into my brain the way Peter did. I get it from the pages of Scripture because what came to Peter and the rest of the apostles is now written down here.

Peter needed to know that if he is going to be a leader to represent Jesus Christ, going to preach the gospel of the kingdom and there was a natural fear built in.

Peter do not have to worry about it. He is going to get revelation.

What an amazing calling, take this common, blustering fisherman and put the revelation of God in him.

Peter did preach and, he wrote two letters 1 and 2 Peter and assisted Mark with the material in his gospel.

2. Divine Reward

Peter was an ordinary fisherman not a priest of a high priest. He was not a Pharisee, or Scholar, or Rabbi, or scribe in Israel.

Matthew 16:18, *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

A little play on words here:

You are rock, **petros**, on this rock,

petra, means rock bed.

Peter you are a stone, but on this bedrock, I will build My church.

The bedrock of what?

It is the confession of Peter.

Matthew 16:16, *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

That is the bedrock of the church.

The church is built on Christ as the Son of the living God. God the Father has revealed to Peter.

That bedrock truth that Peter articulated on which Jesus is going to build His church.

Matthew 16:19, *And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."*

This ordinary fisherman with no training, no stature, no status is told the message that came out of his mouth when he preach that message is going to bar the gates to hell and open the gates to heaven.

Do you think you know what being important means?

People talk about ministry being the highest calling.

Why?

Because the truth of Jesus Christ shuts the gates of hell and opens the doors to heaven.

Can a man have a greater influence than that?

Nobody who does not preach the gospel has any eternal influence.

It must have been satisfying to get great catch of fish.

Peter did unlock the doors of heaven for the Jews.

On the Day of Pentecost, he preached that great sermon. Three thousand Jews believed and thousands more and thousands more and thousands more in the next couple of chapters under his preaching.

In Acts chapter 10 he preached to the first Gentile.

Cornelius, and he believed. He threw open the gates of heaven, he opened the kingdom to the Jews, and he opened the kingdom to the Gentiles.

This ordinary common man had nothing to do with his technique, his education, but it had to do with the power of the Spirit of God and the truth.

Matthew 16:21, *From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.*

This is not the plan in the minds of the disciples!

The apostate form of Judaism is going to collect itself, the elders, the chief priests, the scribes are going to come, and they are going to kill Me, and I Am going to rise from the dead on the third day.

What is Peter's response?

Matthew 16:22, *Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"*

Bad idea.

Cannot let it happen, Lord, sorry, and I am the leader.

It is not going to happen.

I would not allow it.

Pete is talking to the Creator of the universe.

Peter is talking to the Messiah, the Redeemer, the Saviour, God in flesh, unbelievable.

Real danger in leadership that you do not know where your limits are. You get the feeling you are a bit invincible.

You are never going to lead effectively with God till you understand that your plan does not matter, His alone matters. God does not want your strategy, your better plan.

How can people go into the ministry and think they do have a plan?

The answer that Peter got must have rung in his ears until he died.

Matthew 16:23, *But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."*

Peter was just as available to Satan as he was to the Lord.
We all are, aren't we?

Do not ever estimate your abilities.
Peter was just as available to the devil as he was to God.

The greater your potential to be used by God, the greater your potential to be used by the devil.

Peter was looking at this thing from the human viewpoint.

Peter was hindering God's work. The great hinderer of God's work is Satan, so get behind Me, Satan.

Lose all your self-confidence!

Peter starts to feel good about that and then oversteps his bounds and the Lord has to cut his legs out from under him. Peter you better watch out you are just as likely to be used by the devil as you are by God.

This ought to put fear in his heart.

3. Rejection

Not the Lord's rejection of Peter, but his rejection of the Lord.

On the night of the Passover, the night of the betrayal of Jesus. They sang a hymn. They went out to the Mount of Olives.

Matthew 26:30-31, *And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ³¹ Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'*

This is the prophecy from Zechariah, that when the Messiah was taken captive, all the disciples would flee.

Matthew 26:32-33, *But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."* ³³ *Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble."*

Peter said that he is not like all other men and he was sure that would not do that.

Matthew 26:34, *Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."*

Peter said to Jesus again you are wrong Lord!

Matthew 26:35, *Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And so said all the disciples.*

Do you think Peter was the leader?

Sure, they all quacked right after him the same way.

Great confidence.

Overestimating your spiritual strength is deadly.

Jesus already tried to teach Peter that his plans don't supersede His.

Do not offer your plans Jesus, follow Him.

Matthew 26:69-75, *Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee." ⁷⁰ But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are saying."*

⁷¹ And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁷² But again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man!" ⁷³ And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you." ⁷⁴ Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know the Man!" Immediately a rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly.

Did the Lord let this happen?

Sure.

Did the Lord make this happen?

No.

Why did He let it happen?

Because no man is ultimately useful to the Lord until he has absolutely no trust in himself.

Peter rose to the highest pinnacle of his own self-confidence.

- I will never deny You,
- I will die first,
- Everybody else may deny You.

But that very night, that is exactly what he did repeatedly!
So much for self-confidence.

This is called the breaking of the man. This is the crushing of Peter. No man ultimately is useful to God until he has been so crushed.

Peter's failure was necessary.

Now before we are too hard on Peter, at least Peter was hanging around the trial.

At least he had the courage to be there. But the Lord allowed for Peter to be in that position because this crushing of Peter's self-confidence was critical. He was a broken man at this point. He was never the same after this. He was not the bold, self-confident, brash man anymore. This crushed him and that is critical.

Peter's great rejection was part of the experience the Lord used to shape him.

The Lord needed a man who received revelation.

The Lord needed a man who by the message he preached could bar the gates of hell and throw open the gates of heaven.

The Lord needed a man who recognized his own sinfulness.

The Lord also needed a man who was crushed and had absolutely no trust in his self-confidence.

You must get to that point in ministry where you literally don't trust yourself, your ideas, your thoughts and you lean hard and heavy on the Lord. You had to have a man who would follow

the plan, His plan, not Peter's plan, and He had to have a man who had no confidence in his flesh.

Paul was useful because he thought he was the chief of sinners.

Peter never got over this. He spent the rest of his life kind of a broken person.

His statement would be,
I only know what the Lord tells me.
I can only function in the power of the Lord.
I can only do the plan as God has laid it out.

4. Divine recommissioning.

Jesus says to the disciples, prior to this, "Go to Galilee." He has died and risen again. The Lord is alive now from the grave forty days and He is meeting with the disciples and speaking to them of things pertaining to the kingdom.
But He sends them to Galilee.

The apostles up there in Galilee and they are waiting for the risen Lord to come.

John 21:2-3, *Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. ³ Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They*

went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing.

They got in the boat, probably his own boat, but they could not catch fish anymore because the Lord would not let them.

Finally, Jesus comes and around them they catch great pile of fish. Jesus prepares the breakfast for them.

They had breakfast.

Jesus calls him by his old name because he is acting like his old self.

John 21:15, *So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"*

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Feed My lambs."

This is re-commissioning.

This is the ordination of Peter right here and it is wonderful because the Lord had every reason to give up on him.

Why do you think He does this three times?

Because there were how many denials?

Three.

This is a recommissioning of a man who from all intents and purposes was once too strong for ministry and is now self-proclaimed too weak for ministry.

But because he is too weak for ministry, he is exactly what the Lord wants.

When he was strong, he was useless.

Now that he is crushed, he is useful.

So, the Lord picks him up to use him.

But he is still Peter.

John 21:18-19, *Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.”¹⁹ This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me.”*

Jesus told him he was going to die, told him he was going to stretch his hands, be crucified.

What Jesus was telling Peter?

Peter, you are going to be faithful, you are going to be faithful to the very end!

- You can tend My lambs,
- You can shepherd My sheep,
- You can feed My sheep,
- You can do this
- You will do it until martyr's death!

Peter have finally become the man that Jesus wanted Him to be because now he is a man who does not have any confidence in himself.

Peter takes about two steps and turns around.
He sees the disciple whom Jesus loved that is John.

What about John?

Jesus just told Peter that he is going to be faithful until end.

Oh Peter, you are just relentless.
You cannot seem to go in one direction for any length.

What is going to happen to him?

Jesus said to him, this is really humorous, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow Me."

If he lives till the Second Coming, it is none of your business.

This is Peter.

The Lord's taking him through his ordination and his recommissioning, and he is broken and crushed.

The Lord restores him. He takes a couple of steps and he already gets off track.

Peter did.

He became the man the Lord wanted him to be.

2 Peter 1:12-14, *For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. ¹³Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, ¹⁴knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. ¹⁵Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.*

Peter says that he is going to give the truth and even though you know it. He will keep giving it because he is going to die and his death is very near. Jesus told him the kind death he is going to die.

He became the man the Lord wanted him to be.

- ✓ He was the leader of the church in the first twelve chapters of Acts.
- ✓ He was the one who moved to replace Judas with Matthias.

- ✓ He was the spokesman for the church on the Day of Pentecost.
- ✓ He with John healed the lame man at the temple.
- ✓ He defied the Sanhedrin.
- ✓ He dealt with the problem of Simon, the satanic, false healer in Samaria.
- ✓ He dealt with the hypocrisy of Ananias and Sapphira.
- ✓ He healed Aeneas and raised Dorcas from the dead.
- ✓ He took the gospel to the Gentiles.
- ✓ He wrote two epistles, 1 and 2 Peter.
- ✓ He was the leader God wanted him to be.

Divine revelation,
 Divine reward,
 Peter's Rejection,
 Divine recommissioning

Led Peter to the great realization that he became Rock!



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Apostles- Peter 02

Luke 6:12-16

Luke 6:12-16, *Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.¹³ And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:¹⁴ Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew;¹⁵ Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot;¹⁶ Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.*

General observations:

They were all common men.

All of them were from Galilee except for Judas, who was from a town called Kerioth in the south.

They were rural people from the part of the nation of Israel that did not really have much prestige or nobility.

- None of them was a Pharisee.
- None of them was a Sadducee.
- None of them was a priest.
- None of them was a scribe.
- None of them was any prominent person.

They were all very common men.

Four of them were fishermen, one was a tax collector, one was a terrorist, and one was a traitor.

There are four lists of the apostles in the New Testament.
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts.

Matthew 10, Mark 3, Luke 6 and Acts 1.

In these lists the names are always the same, so that we know exactly who these twelve were. But the names are not in identical order in the lists, with some exceptions.

The first name in all four lists is always Peter.

We have three groups of four.

- Group one,
- Group two, and
- Group three.

Group One:

1. Simon called Peter,
2. Andrew,
3. James,
4. John.

Peter, James and John's names get mixed around in the list, Peter's is always first, but they are always in group one.

Group Two:

1. Philip,
2. Bartholomew — or Nathanael,
3. Matthew,
4. Thomas.

Always group two in every list.

The names of Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas get mixed, but Philip is always the first name of group two.

Group Three:

1. James the son of Alphaeus,
2. Simon the Zealot,
3. Judas son of James,
4. Judas Iscariot.

Always the same in every list.

The names may be mixed a little bit, the two middle names, the names of Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James get mixed.

James the son of Alphaeus is always the first name in group four and Judas is always the last name of the twelve.

What do we learn by that?

The name at the top of the list is always Peter, who was the leader of everybody.

These groups of four are in decreasing intimacy from Christ. Group one always around Christ; Peter, James, John and Andrew, the most intimate group.

We also learn that there are leaders within the group.

- leader of group one, Peter.
- leader of group two, Philip.
- leader of group three, James the son of Alphaeus.

There are leaders among leaders and a leader over all of them, namely Peter.

Simon Peter.

Peter learned through experience that God would speak through him, that he was not dependent upon a human message but that he would be given the message from God.

He learned through experience that God would use him for supernatural influence. He would be given the keys to the kingdom. Peter's life and message would have such an impact that he would be unlocking the kingdom of God so that men and women could go in.

He also learned by experience that he was humanly weak, and he could not trust his own resolve to trust his own strength and own determination.

Right character

Character causes people to respect you,
Respect causes people to trust you,
Trust causes people to follow you.

Character makes leadership possible.
It makes consistent leadership possible.

Where you have no character, you cannot really be the leader.

Human leadership:

"trustworthy, respectable, unselfish, humble, consistent, self-disciplined, self-controlled, courageous."

Those are virtues that society recognizes belong to real leaders, and certainly they reflect the ***Imagio Deo***. (Image of God)

They reflect the image of God in man for all of those things are attributes of God and Christ.

- ✓ Christ is perfectly trustworthy,
- ✓ Christ is perfectly respectable,
- ✓ Christ is perfectly unselfish,
- ✓ Christ is perfectly humble,
- ✓ Christ is perfectly consistent,
- ✓ Christ is perfectly self-disciplined,
- ✓ Christ is perfectly self-controlled,
- ✓ Christ is perfectly courageous,
- ✓ Christ has the perfect integrity.

Purest, highest, and noblest attributes of mankind are simply reflections of the attributes of God demonstrated in Christ.

So, if one is to be a leader spiritually, then the objective is to bring people to Christlikeness. In order to bring people to Christlikeness, one must therefore set an example for what those virtues are that is to manifest the same virtues that characterize Christ.

That is why the standard for leadership in the church is so high, whether you are reading about the standard for an elder or a deacon or any other leader in the church.

In 1 Timothy 6 spells about the characteristics of a man of God. The standards are high because the goal is high. The spiritual goal of all spiritual leadership is Christlikeness.

- Natural leadership is characterized by self-confidence.
- Spiritual leadership is characterized by confidence in God and no confidence in oneself.

- Natural leadership, we look for somebody who knows people.
- Spiritual leadership, we look for somebody who knows God.

- Natural leadership, we want somebody who makes his own decisions.
- Spiritual leadership, we want somebody who seeks to know the will of God.

- Natural leadership somebody who is ambitious, who is driven.
- Spiritual leadership somebody whose only desire in life is that God be glorified.

- ❖ Natural leadership we want somebody who originates his own plans and methods, an original thinker.
 - ❖ Spiritual leadership we want somebody who understands the Word of God and obeys it.
-
- Natural leadership we want somebody who enjoys commanding others.
 - Spiritual leadership we want somebody who enjoys, fill in the blank, serving others.
-
- Natural leadership we want somebody motivated by personal considerations, motivated by success.
 - Spiritual leadership, we want somebody motivated by the love of God.
-
- Natural leadership we want somebody who is independent.
 - Spiritual leadership we want somebody who is totally dependent on God.

We are not looking or studying about natural leadership. To be a leader for the Lord requires some natural raw material. Peter had that but there is a very serious work to do to shape that into spiritual leadership and it comes through experience and it comes through development of character.

Character is more critical in spiritual leadership than anywhere.

It is critical in spiritual leadership because the goal of all spiritual leadership is Christlikeness. If a leader who is going to move people toward being like Christ, then they must be able to show such an exemplary character.

"The only thing that walks back from the tomb with the mourners and refuses to be buried is the character of a man. What a man survives him. It can never be buried."

J.R Miller.

We should be concerned about what people think of you after you are dead. But we are also very much more concerned about what they think about us while we are alive.

God had plans for Peter. Peter wanted to be used by the Lord but lot of work to be done to make him into the man he needed to be, and that involved the development of the right character.

1. Submission

A spiritual leader requires submission.

That is contrary to the world's definition:

A natural leader needs to be dominant and dominating.

In the spiritual realm we need to learn submission because everything we do as spiritual leaders is a submission to God.

- ✓ Submission to God,
- ✓ Submission to God's Word,
- ✓ Submission to God's plan,
- ✓ Submission to Holy Spirit,
- ✓ Submission to God's purpose.

Leaders tend to be confident. They tend to be overt. They tend to be eager. They tend to be aggressive. They tend to dominate. Peter had that in him. He was just fast talking, fast acting. He was the guy, he was the man, he was in charge, he could grab the bull by the horns, right, wrong, or indifferent. Jesus had to teach him the lesson of submission.

There are several ways in which Peter learned submission.

Matthew 17:24, *After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma temple tax came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?"*

Capernaum was the headquarters of Jesus' ministry in Galilee and the hometown of Peter and Andrew.

Two-drachma tax is two days' work, a substantial tax.

Matthew 17:25, *"Yes, he does," he replied. When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. "What do you think, Simon?" he asked. "From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own children or from others?"*

Which was a bit of a problem for Peter. They hated the Romans. They hated the Roman taxation system. It was bad enough for them to have to pay the tax to the idolatrous pagan Romans, but to imagine the Lord of glory, the Son of God paying tax to Rome was probably unthinkable to Peter.

So, it may have been hard for him to admit that he had to say yes.

Jesus called him Simon because his thoughts were not good. Why should Jesus be paying taxes?

Why should we pay taxes as we are not a part of the kingdom of Rome, we are not even a part of the kingdom of this world?

Jesus is my King, and I am a son of the King.

Every Jew who was at all patriotic loathed the idea of paying taxes anyway and now that Peter had been promoted to the kingdom of God and had the Lord Jesus, the Messiah as his King, it was even more unthinkable to him that he should pay tax to Rome.

Jesus knew exactly what he was thinking because the question indicates He knew what he was thinking.

Matthew 17:26, *From others," Peter answered. "Then the children are exempt," Jesus said to him. ²⁷ "But so that we may*

not cause offense, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

This may be a little confusing to Peter. He just made the point that the king's sons do not pay the tax and he must have thought that Jesus was agreeing with him.

Doesn't it bother all of you when you know somebody is not paying their tax and you are?

Peter learned his lesson.

Please do read Peter's epistles with Peter in mind. Because his letters are so much unlike him. The Peter of the gospels can hardly be the Peter of the epistles. The only explanation for that is that a tremendous metamorphosis went on in this man's life.

Peter admits that the people whom he is writing are aliens and strangers. This is believers scattered all over the Roman Empire. You are all strangers and aliens, and none of you belong here.

1 Peter 2:11-12, *Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

Peter advising them to make sure that they live their life so men cannot scandalize them and the gospel. They cannot honestly slander you.

How do you do that?

1 Peter 2:13-14, *Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority,¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.*

Submit to everybody in authority from the king down to the governor, to everybody who represents him, submit!

Pay your tax, do what is right.

We conclude that Peter learned submission.

1 Peter 2:15-17, *For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.¹⁶ Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves.¹⁷ Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honour the emperor.*

You are free.

You are free from human laws and human kingdoms.

But do not use that to cover up your greed!

Do what is right to honour God.

Hard for a leader naturally dominant, forceful, aggressive, out front, on top, calling the shots, to submit himself, that is very hard to do, particularly to government.

A true leader is one who has learned to submit, even to the most unlikely authority and that is the pagan, secular authority. If you can learn to submit there, you can learn to submit to that which is from God.

2. Self-discipline.

There is an element of leadership that leaders have anger

One of the big problems among leaders in today's world is anger.

There is a wide-reaching movement today called "anger management."

Mostly with CEOs and people in high positions of leadership because they are angry all the time. What makes them angry is bureaucracies, government intervention, government laws, taxation, regulations, human resource problems, political correctness etc.

Leaders tend to be pioneer types like to say this is my dream. They just hit wall after wall with all the complexities of modern life and it generates a tremendous amount of anger.

You cannot fire anybody.

You cannot tell the truth about anybody.

You cannot tell anybody about anything that is wrong with anybody.

You have got all these other things to deal with.

You cannot get where you are going to go, and the frustration gets higher and higher and so you have got some guy coming in to teach you about anger management.

Everybody in the room is mad.

When the seminar is over, they are now mad at the guy who taught anger management. Never to have him back again and he does not understand the issues.

That is why marriages break up.

They go home and they are just as mad when they talk to their wife as they are at the office.

Anger plays a part.

That was true with Peter!

There were over 500 people, including the Roman soldiers, come to arrest Jesus at the Garden of Gethsemane. They are going to arrest Jesus captive and Peter gets angry at the thought of that, pulls out his sword and starts into the crowd.

The first guy in line is named Malchus, servant of the High Priest. He takes a swing at his head, misses his head. He ducks, he loses an ear. He is just one ear into the crowd. This is not rational.

They were skilled fighters. The Lord reaches over and gives Malchus an ear. You would think that would have created some conversation among the people. Apparently, it did not, they were so resolute.

John 18:10-11, *Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)* ¹¹ *Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"*

Peter lost his temper at that point. He was so angry at what was going to happen that he went into an irrational conduct. He needed to learn to restrain himself.

Peter did learn!

1 Peter 2:21, *To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.*

Sometimes we must suffer.

Sometimes we must be taken captive.

Sometimes we must be put in prison.

Sometimes we must be executed.

Peter says that in the case of Christ, He set an example because He was suffering though.

Peter takes the prophetic words of **Isaiah 53:9** and quotes it here.

1 Peter 2:22, *“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”*

Sometimes you are not guilty of anything, but you are being

- Vilified,
- Hindered,
- Imprisoned
- Tortured, and
- Persecuted.

So as Jesus.

1 Peter 2:23-25, *When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” ²⁵ For “you were like sheep going astray,¹ but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

Jesus committed Himself to God.

You know the situation, it is not fair, it is not right, it is not just, I do not deserve it, I did not do anything to get this.

This is how it is, Father, I will not revile, I will not threaten them, I will just entrust my soul to You.
That is the attitude.

That is sometimes very difficult for a leader to develop. People want to grab their sword and push their way through the opposition.

3. Humility

It is one their traits for the natural leaders to be proud because they are followed.

People praise them.

People look up to them.

People admire them.

Peter and this are true of leaders too, had a tremendous amount of self-confidence.

Matthew 26:33-35, *Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." ³⁴ "Truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." ³⁵ But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same.*

Tremendous pride, self-confidence.

Many denials but on three different occasions, three different locations he made these denials right after he said he would not do it.

He had to learn not to trust in himself.

He had to learn not to be proud.

When he wrote his epistle, same epistle, look at

1 Peter 5:2-6, *Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve;³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.⁵ In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.*

Isn't this great coming from Peter?

Peter is saying,

You must learn, elders and pastors to be humble.

You must be submitting to your elders.

You must humble yourselves before one another.
You must humble yourself under the mighty hand of God.

4. Love

Peter also learned love.

Natural leaders do not love. People are a means to their end. They use people. They set people up in a structure that gets them to their goal. It can even be true in church that people are simply pawns on the chess board, a means to an end.

Leaders tend to be task oriented rather than people oriented. They tend to plough over people to achieve their goals.

Peter needed to learn love and the Lord taught him that.

One of the most beautiful scenes between Jesus and the apostles, in the upper room the night of His betrayal.

John 13, they had come to dinner in this upper room they had for the night to hold the Passover. They were in Jerusalem. Jesus would be betrayed that night by Judas. He would then be arrested.

They were gathered for the supper and supper was a long event. It was a long supper and reclined, so that the head was

near somebody's feet. In those days the roads were either muddy or dusty, so feet were dirty.

The common custom was that when you went into a house for a meal like this there was a slave who was the lowest slaves of all servants who washed the feet. The least desirable of all jobs.

But there was not a slave. Nobody was there to do that and so they were prepared for supper, there had not been any foot washing which was very appropriate in that setting. It had not been done.

John 13:4-6, *so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"*

Jesus is taking on the role of the lowest of the low of slaves. He is washing the dirty feet of these apostles.

What they were doing?

If you compare the other accounts, they were arguing about which of them was the greatest.

In a time when they are arguing about who is the greatest, nobody is going to become the servant and wash feet. They are all trying to convince each other that they should be elevated, not humiliated.

So, during their self-pride and self-exaltation, Jesus does what none of them would do.

Jesus comes to Simon Peter, and you can imagine that it was quiet until they got to Peter. They were stunned by what He was doing.

What do You think You're doing?

This is again the brash and bold Peter.

John 13:7-8, *Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."*

Peter is the master of the absolute statement, "

I will never deny You.

I will die first.

You will never wash my feet."

There is no grey in Peter's life, everything is black and white!

John 13:10, *"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"*

There is no middle ground with Peter.
Jesus washed his feet.

John 13:10, *Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."*

This is sort of a spiritual symbol here.

Application of what took place here found in verses 34 and 35.

John 13:34-35, *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

What were they arguing about?

Which of them was the greatest?

They were arguing about who was the best.

Selfish.

How had Jesus loved them?

Washed their feet.

You love by going all the way down and humbling yourselves, sacrificing yourself to meet a need at the lowest level.

You have got to love each other.

You cannot be fighting each other for prominence.

It is hard for leaders to wash the feet of those who are perceivably below them.

Did Peter learn to love?

Peter did.

1 Peter 4:8, *Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.*

Peter is commanding his readers to love each other fervently! Love to the maximum of your capacity.

Peter learned that and he told the aliens when he wrote the letter, the believers in the Roman world, to love each other.

5. Compassion.

At the time of his denial, the Lord said to him you will strengthen others.

Luke 22:31-32, *“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”*

What was this about?

Leaders tend to be short on compassion, short on being comforters.

They tend to be driven by the goals and driven by the objectives and driven through the process. They do not stop very long to care for the wounded as they go.

Peter needed to learn compassion.

Why did Jesus allow Peter to be tempted?

So that when it is over you can strengthen the brothers.

For the rest of your life, you will have compassion on people who struggle. Peter will have compassion on people who think they are stronger spiritually than they really are.

Peter will have compassion on people who struggle with temptation and fall into doubt and sin.

They need to be compassionate, tender-hearted, gracious, kind, comforting to those who struggle with sin.

We all hate to see self-righteous people brutalize somebody who falls into sin, as if they themselves had no sin. Peter need to learn that even the best and the noblest can be crushed because he was going to be crushed.

1 Peter 5:7-10, *Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is*

undergoing the same kind of sufferings. ¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

How does Peter know that?

Been there!

This is a leader who understands human weakness.

This is a leader who has been to the bottom.

This is a leader whose weaknesses have been thrown in his face and he understands what men and women go through.

6. Courageous.

One must have courage to be a spiritual leader because you are going to have opposition.

The kingdom of darkness is set against the kingdom of light.

Lies are set against the truth.

Satan is set against God.

The demons are set against the holy purposes of Christ.

There is going to be difficulty when you go.

Jesus said to Peter when he restored him at sea of Galilee in John 21.

"feed My sheep,"
"shepherd My sheep"
"feed My lambs"

You are going to die for me.

The price of preaching will be death for you, Peter, martyrdom.
So, Peter is going to have to have courage.

Peter had not exhibited a lot of courage.
He denies Jesus in front of various groups of people, no courage there.

But when we get into the book of Acts, something different has happened, seriously.

Acts 4, Peter and John come before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling counsel. The Sanhedrin says you are not to speak at all or teach in the name of Jesus.

Acts 4:18-20, *Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! ²⁰ As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."*

Peter says it is a very simple decision:
Shall we obey you or God?

Peter went ahead and preached.

In Acts 5 they were again brought before the Sanhedrin for not obeying their order to stop preaching. Again, they told them the same thing. You are not supposed to be doing this.

Acts 5:29, *Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than human beings!*

Courage, spiritual leader must have that kind of courage.

Peter is not a compromiser.

He does not vacillate.

He is characterized by courage.

These are the character components that were necessary to make Peter the man God wanted him to be, to turn him from Simon into Rock.

Peter learned submission, restraint, humility, love, compassion, and courage from the Lord Himself and from the work of the Holy Spirit in his heart.

What a man Peter was. Perfect?

No.

Galatians 2. We know what he did in Galatians 2.

He did a terrible thing, he acted like a hypocrite.

He acted hypocritically. He was eating with the Gentiles, having a big time up in Antioch eating with the Gentiles, and some Judaizers showed up, some of the circumcision. He stopped eating with the Gentiles to try to please the Judaizers.

Paul says in Galatians, "I withstood him to the face." That is wrong, Peter. Peter was confronted by Paul himself.

Galatians 2:11-13, *When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹²For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. ¹³The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.*

Shows us that when Peter did it, everybody else did it too because he is a leader.

So crucial that leaders do what is right because they have followers. He was not perfect, but he responded to Paul's correction.

We do not know why he did that, whether he was trying to be inoffensive, which was novel for him. But he was not perfect, and I am glad that is there in Galatians 2 because if from then on all we have is perfection, we can't identify as well.

Peter's life could be summed up in the last words of the last epistle he wrote, "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."